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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/987,040	11/13/2001	Craig Priest	13808	6305
293	7590	07/26/2005	EXAMINER	
Ralph A. Dowell of DOWELL & DOWELL P.C. 2111 Eisenhower Ave. Suite 406 Alexandria, VA 22314			SHAH, KAMINI S	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2142	

DATE MAILED: 07/26/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/987,040	PRIEST ET AL.	
	Examiner Kamini S. Shah	Art Unit 2142	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 April 2005.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 17-32 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 17-21 and 23-32 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 22 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election without traverse of claims 17-30 in the reply filed on 4/19/05 is acknowledged.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims 17-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by 6,757,710.

Regarding to claimed invention '710 includes

a method of operating a device providing a service allowing a plurality of users to communicate with each other, comprising: for each of said plurality of users determining if said each of said plurality of users wishes to pay for use of said service, and thereby identifying each of said users as a paying user or a non-paying user (see col. 119, 25-40, "Payment service objects and partner servers" and steps 1302 and 1310); allowing paying users to communicate with all of said plurality of users (such as data exchange method 141 and data exchange rule 140 on col. 120, lines 3 col. 121,

lines 1-20); restricting non-paying users from communicating with other non-paying users (such as data exchange method 141 and data exchange rule 140 on col. 120, lines 3 col. 121, lines 1-20).

Regarding claims 18-20 for including bridging of telephone calls between said plurality of users, and permits said users to exchange message with each other in near-real time, see col. 122, lines 22-26.

Regarding claim 21 wherein said device comprises a telephone interface and a storage medium and wherein method comprises exchanging saved messages, see col. 123, lines 54-65.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

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6. Claims 23-32 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over 6,697,786 in view of 6,757,710.

Regarding claimed invention '786 includes

A method of operating a message exchange device comprising: storing greetings originating with each of a plurality of users using said message exchange device (see figure 5, and step 812, col. 8, lines 42-61). Regarding to claimed step of obtaining from each of said plurality of users an indicator of whether that user wishes to pay to use said message exchange server, thereby classifying each of said plurality of users as a paying or non-paying user allowing paying users access to all of said stored greetings; allowing non-paying users access to only those greetings originating with paying users, '786 does not specifically discloses the choice of payment for user. However, '710 disclose Payment service objects and partner servers and steps 1302 and 1310, col. 119, lines 25-40 and data exchange method 141 and data exchange rule 140 on col. 120, lines 3 col. 121, lines 1-20). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of the ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to combine the teaching of '710 for allowing user for payment of service into the service of '786, because both analogues art will improve the capability regarding features available on personal grating operating service.

Allowable Subject Matter

7. Claim 22 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

8. the cited prior arts does not teach calculating cost of service for each paying user, based on time each of said paying users uses the service.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kamini S. Shah whose telephone number is 571-272-2279. The examiner can normally be reached on IFFP.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Andrew B. Caldwell can be reached on 571-272-3868. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Kamini S Shah
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2142

kss